

Radio Talk transcript

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"At Issue" with Frank Hudak

WTRV Radio AM & FM

Guest: American novelist Vanna Bonta

Date: 11/10/1996 Richmond, Virginia

[Music]

Male: Good morning from WTVR AM and FM Richmond. Now we present our weekly public affairs program, *At Issue*. The opinions and views expressed on this program may not necessarily be those of the management, staff, and advertisers of WTVR AM and FM. Now our host for *At Issue*, Frank Hudak.

[Music]

Frank Hudak: Well, good morning, and I certainly hope that the second half of your weekend is turning out to be just about as nice as the first half of your weekend. We've got a very interesting lady with us this morning, and "interesting" I say because she is a writer. Her name is Vanna Bonta. And I don't know how many of you folks have heard of her or her works, but we're going to get into that a little bit this morning. She is extremely interesting, and I'm just very tickled to death to have her with us this morning. Good morning, Vanna.

Vanna Bonta: Good morning, Frank, and good morning to everyone listening.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. Well, you must still be a little bit tired. You just got off the plane from Italy last night, right?

Vanna Bonta: Yes, and there is a time difference, although it's much easier adjusting going ...

Frank Hudak: Going the other way?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Is it really?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah, because you're traveling with the sun.

Frank Hudak: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And I think the magnetic fields actually have a, a more strenuous effect.

Frank Hudak: See, already, I, I caught that segue there. That, that was pretty good, the magnetic fields. We're going to get into those a little bit. She has written a, an

extremely interesting book, among other things, but you, i-, if what I read is true here, you actually started writing when you were six years old?

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Now I mean this isn't just ... What were you writing at six years old?

Vanna Bonta: Well, it ... I actually was reading some of it the other day, (pauses), poetry and short fiction, short stories. My first collection of poems was put together when I was 11, and I still have my first rejection slip from Charles Scribner & Sons when I was 10. And it was, it's astounding to me to [00:02:00] read the letter with which I submitted them. I mean it sounded ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: I could have written it today. It was just, you know, these, they're my work.

Frank Hudak: It was well thought-out.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: And you just ... put it together, right?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah. It was just written ... it was lucid.

Frank Hudak: And they rejected you?

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And I saved it.

Frank Hudak: And I bet they're sorry then, are they?

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: [Laughs] But what is it? I mean they say it builds character to have so many rejections, doesn't it? I mean you really have to go through this.

Vanna Bonta: It can build character ... and any experience, no matter what it is, can build character depending on how we react to it. I think that, (pauses), with writing or actually any endeavor what rejection can do is that one, (pauses), does two things: One, you, you learn to apply your own standards, as with writing that I did ... I finally reached the point where neither compliments nor rejection really affected what I knew the work was...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ...in terms of just meeting certain standards that I set for myself. So it builds integrity to that degree ... or it can be discouraging. But again, it's the choice of the individual on how to react...

Frank Hudak: Yeah, yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... or to act upon ...

Frank Hudak: Well, I mean at, at six years old, were you, uh, just kind of forming stories in your head or putting things together? Or what really do you feel that triggered this?

Vanna Bonta: My first poems were about nature, the sea and ...

Frank Hudak: And where did you live?

Vanna Bonta: My first ... when ... well, I was born and when I was a few months old, I went to Italy and then, I lived in the Orient. My first experience that was, I think, memorable in forming my desire to communicate was when I was looking through a fence when I was five years old at some Thai children ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... and they were making noises, words that I didn't understand, and vice versa but we made [00:04:00] contact, eye contact, and that quintessential human spirit that flowed back and forth ...

Frank Hudak: Sure.

Vanna Bonta: ... where we understood our smiles and laughter ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... , was just indelible to me, and from that sprang, or maybe that just reflected a desire that existed, which was to build bridges between people, between things that I perceived and saw that I wanted to share with others, or things that would ... improve or better or interpret the human condition.

Frank Hudak: Sure. You know, you appear to me to be somewhat of an emotional person. Am I, am I correct in my ...?

Vanna Bonta: I do. I do.

Frank Hudak: You, you feel things, right?

Vanna Bonta: I feel things very deeply.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, yeah, and I think that's very important...

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: ...especially for this type of communication that you're trying to extol.

Vanna Bonta: Yes. In fact, I've often said one of the greatest dues that an artist pays is to remain sentient, to remain ... to not numb ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... emotions, and be aware of them.

Frank Hudak: Yes, exactly. , and unfortunately, it's easier in society today for women to, to at least, you know, show these emotions than it is for men. I would hope that there are some changes coming about as far as men are concerned, but ... and maybe that's why we have women that are true psychics, right? because they have gone beyond this, and they're not afraid to exhibit their emotions, and all of these things kinda help. What do you think?

Vanna Bonta: I think that's a, that's a really interesting and good point, and I think that emotions serve a purpose.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And if one is true to them, they tell you basically how ... they're like a gauge of spiritual and ... spiritual survival.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: I think, on the other hand, with anything, moderation is important, and I think men develop [00:06:00] skills of intellectualizing and reasoning their emotions...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... and situations. This isn't necessarily negative. It is if one denies the emotions. But I think a combination of the two, . , In my dealings, I think that thought and people are not relegated just to gender but that there are predominantly the ... one can say women are more intuitive.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And they allow themselves to be more so.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, yeah. I, I really believe that women are more intuitive, . , and I believe it's probably because of the fact that they, you know, believe in their emotions and they use their emotions. . , it, it's just ... I guess it, it's disappointing to me that the way society is and what society demands ...

Vanna Bonta: That a man not show them and ...

Frank Hudak: That a man not show them. As a matter of fact, until maybe the last five or six years or so, you know women weren't allowed to do certain things because again, because of what society demanded of them, right? Or they had to stay here or do this or whatever. As a matter of fact, they weren't even paid equally, is that right?

Vanna Bonta: Yes, that's true.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: But now an interesting thing about that though is that, on one hand, if a person is completely ruled by their emotions... they're not always an accurate gauge, the same way that intellectualizing and reasoning everything can also be influenced or biased by missing information or by a lack of being in touch with emotions.

Frank Hudak: So what we're saying here is that people need common sense.

Vanna Bonta: People need common sense.

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah. And I think rather than ... I think, if one can generalize women and men, women should be able to understand and learn from the rationalizing or reasoning process of men, and men be able to understand that a woman feeling emotions isn't necessarily being out of, control or, . , that ...

Frank Hudak: I think it's a darn good weapon you ladies have there because you start to cry and we just fall apart, you know. There is just no way we can combat that. I think we're ... [00:08:00] men are very mechanical, in different areas, but basically, if you would look at them, it's just being mechanical. In other words, we're fixers, and there are some things that just cannot be fixed, and this is terribly frustrating to us. There are some things that just have to be that way. We have to be more acceptable of what.

Vanna Bonta: So when, when tears necessarily, (pauses), tears can be a release , or a relief of emotions ...

Frank Hudak: Absolutely.

Vanna Bonta: ... that goes beyond saying, "Well, this is what's wrong." Sometimes, just the tears are just a ... and maybe, if that's an understood rather than saying, "Well, what I can do about it?" maybe understanding that you don't really have to do anything about it other than realize, as a man ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... , that it's OK, and just say, "OK. You're crying. You're releasing what you need to release," if there's ...

Frank Hudak: Uh, yeah. I fully believe what you're saying. I think that again though, you know, we are really pretty much guided through life by peer pressure. And if you look at that in a ... and I'm sure just as a woman does not choose to be embarrassed, neither does a man, and because society hasn't come to accept this yet.

I know, for instance, I had some folks on one time, and we were talking about in Europe, it's not unusual for a man to kiss another man.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: You know. It's a greeting.

Vanna Bonta: It's normal greeting.

Frank Hudak: It's a greeting, OK?

Vanna Bonta: Right, yeah.

Frank Hudak: But don't try it in certain parts of, of the rest of the world. Don't, don't try it in the United States, for instance, OK, because they haven't really evolved to this yet.

Vanna Bonta: Yes, it's true. , and the same ... Women in Europe walk arm in arm, and men, ... I think that it's unfortunate, in a way, that, with so much sex and violence ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ...on the one hand of being that it's liberating people, it actually creates more restrictions because it inhibits the expression of just good old affinity or affection ...

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: ... without people thinking that there is [00:10:00] some kind of erotic or sexual connotation ...

Frank Hudak: Exactly.

Vanna Bonta: ... which it doesn't necessarily ...

Frank Hudak: I mean people are afraid to hug anymore.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: You know. And it's all the stuff about, I guess ... now, and I'm not ...

Vanna Bonta: That's ...

Frank Hudak: ... and I don't want to get any letters on this, but you know, talking about abuse, you know, that there, there is a fine line here. You have to be able to understand what is truly abuse and what is just friendship and warmth.

Vanna Bonta: Absolutely.

Frank Hudak: Right?

Vanna Bonta: Absolutely.

Frank Hudak: Now you had said something else too, off the air before we started this morning about, why women don't feel beautiful?

Vanna Bonta: Yes, ...

Frank Hudak: Do you want to get into this?

Vanna Bonta: Oh, sure.

Frank Hudak: [Laughs] OK.

Vanna Bonta: I think that generally, most women don't feel as beau-, beautiful enough or never feel beautiful enough, and they always feel like they have to be doing something else to make themselves more beautiful. And ..., in, in my book "*Flight*," the heroine is a being of light or a soul, as you will, who becomes incarnate. She materializes as from being a state of pure intelligence and light who can make herself appear as she wills into a solid human female.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: In a way, the human body will never be as beautiful ... I mean we see images. We're constantly shown images that are doctored with air brushing, with lights, with retouching.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And there is no human body that exists that is that ...

Frank Hudak: You know, I, I really believe that, but as I told you before, I, I have seen some shows on what they can do now with computer imaging.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: I mean they don't even have to put the makeup on these models now because everything is done with a computer after the pictures are made.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: So shadows disappear, a mole would appear or disappear ...

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: Or whatever, you know. Lines disappear, and it's all done with computers. So what they're doing is they're, they're faking you out.

Vanna Bonta: [00:12:00] Absolutely.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: Completely. And as well, on a physical level, just of what really is worthy about another human being in terms of their character and who that person is. I know before I went to Hollywood, I used to feel, you know, like I was pretty or, or beautiful, not so much physically but just good about myself.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: Then you start going places, and they tell you, "You're too short. You're too tall. You're too fat."

Frank Hudak: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: "You're too thin."

Frank Hudak: I've heard that.

Vanna Bonta: "Make it blonde. Make it brunette." And I used to think every woman in the world was the most beautiful woman in the world. I could I-, literally look at almost any human being and see their own unique and personal beauty. I still can, although I went through that grueling process, which is very introverting, and I believe women are subjected to it through the media, even if they are not in a profession in which their appearance ...

Frank Hudak: Sure, sure.

Vanna Bonta: You know, [crosstalk 00:12:54].

Frank Hudak: I think it's very demeaning too, but ...

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: The things that really bother me are young girls, for instance, see this, and then you have, different things. For instance, they, they, they want to lose weight. They think they're too fat. Anorexia, OK? It's a big problem in this country right now, and ...

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: And girls are dying from it, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: Because they, they perceive themselves to be heavier than what they are.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: The other ... some of the other things that we've learned from the commercials for cosmetics.

Vanna Bonta: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Frank Hudak: That kinda blows me away too, you know. "I use such and such because I'm worth it."

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Well, I kinda believe in pumping up the old image, you know, that you're worth it, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: That you're, you're a worthwhile person and, and ... but I believe what you say, and that is that the beauty of a person ... I think I have finally evolved to the point in my life where I can look at another person from the neck up, and that's where the beauty is.

Vanna Bonta: That's ...

Frank Hudak: From the neck up. It's actually a lot of it has to do with personality because, you know, as I said a [00:14:00] little bit earlier, you know, off the air, you know, from the neck down, men are pretty much the same, women are pretty much the same.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: But it's, it's really what's between the ears that counts. And if you can really jibe, you know, if you can really just connect.

Vanna Bonta: It's great that you should say that, and it's really ... I found it very interesting, and in fact, the protagonist, Aira Flight, in *Flight*, when she first lands on Earth as a female human starts to notice these billboards that don't have faces.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: They're just billboards of buttocks in jeans, decapitated bodies. And if you even look at movies today, faces lack more character. There is almost this clone-like, ...

Frank Hudak: Exactly.

Vanna Bonta: Another interesting thing to watch are models on runways, whereas high fashion and fashion is a, is a wonderful style, is a wonderful creation and can be fun, that kind of arrogant, haughty, hateful look ...She goes by these mannequins in a store window and is wondering why they all look so angry.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And it's almost this projection of, like, "I'm beautiful and you're not," or ...

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: This dementia, kind of a, a lack of presence of a human being and this vacant kind of self-absorbed delirium ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: ... that runway models and store window mannequins all project, and it's very insidious how it kind of creeps in. So I, I've received some interesting letters from readers who say, "You know, I walk by store windows now, and mannequins never look the same to me. It's like you ...

Frank Hudak: That's right.

Vanna Bonta: ... you've dissolved the hoax, , for me ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: From reading that scene where she is going, "What is this?" you know, like if one arrives on Earth for the first time and is seeing this stuff, "What, what is it?"

Frank Hudak: Yeah, exactly. What is it? You're right. And the whole thing is a facade, I mean everything, ...

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: And, and unfortunately, we have folks that look at this and believe that they should act like that.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And boy, that, that's really ... I don't know if folks [00:16:00] do evolve to the point where they can see the fallacy in this and start to become their own person. I mean truly, it's easy enough to say but it's hard enough to do it. And, once they do, I think they'd be a lot happier.

Vanna Bonta: I think they would be a lot happier.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And there might be certain, you know, marketing interests that might be threatened, but I wouldn't think necessarily so either because there could just be other aspects of fashion that would, you know ...

Frank Hudak: Exactly.

Vanna Bonta: ... celebrate that about people.

Frank Hudak: Change the line of makeup, right?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Change the hair color. Change the clothes.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: Whatever the case may be, you're still going to be in a selling mode, but you're going to be appealing to the ordinary everyday person.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: Which is what 99% of us are.

Vanna Bonta: Right. Rather than trying to be something that one is not that is always kept unattainable intentionally, which is ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ...It's somewhat of a hoax.

Frank Hudak: Well, listen. When I was growing up, you know, I used to see Superman fly, and I thought, "This is neat. Boy what do I gotta do? I'd love to fly."

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: So, you know, it starts at a very early age, when you think about it.

Vanna Bonta: It does.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: It does. And it's good to aspire to things that are productive rather than ...

Frank Hudak: Well, you're right. I eventually did fly, but it was in an airplane.

Vanna Bonta: Good! See?

Frank Hudak: [Laughs]

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: But I wasn't wearing leotards for anybody, huh, but I drew the line right there.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: Yeah. I got four brothers and a sister, and I wasn't going to be the laughingstock of them and everybody else in the neighborhood. I mean they already thought I was nuts anyhow, but you know, to go on with this, mm-mm (negative).

Vanna Bonta: Let's hope it does evolve. And you know, people vote by how they buy, and I think television stations and, and movie and publishing houses do really listen to what people ... they say it's what people want, although box office numbers show oftentimes that the more, I don't know ...warm or humanly oriented films are... the greater successes.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, yeah.

Vanna Bonta: But so it's just a justification for lack of ability to find [00:18:00] talent or product. So they say it's what the people want, and they push buttons ...

Frank Hudak: Well, this thing gets to be like a meat grinder. They just start grinding them out, you know, one after another one after another.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And it doesn't seem to me that people have really, uh ... I ... and I'm not knocking writers, but I think that maybe there is too many of 'em that are either burned out or have lost the creativity that it takes to sit down and put together a good script, a good plot, you know.

Vanna Bonta: I think so too. It's also a solution of not being able to find a writer who can write. You just put together [laughs] people who can ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... string a bunch of events that push buttons, and by ... you get to the end of it and you realize a couple of hours have passed and you're not really left with anything.

Frank Hudak: No. Either I'm looking for a plot that, that never appears.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: You know, or looking ...

Vanna Bonta: One we've already seen [laughs].

Frank Hudak: [Laughs] Or I'm saying ...

Vanna Bonta: Be written.

Frank Hudak: ... why have you billed this as a comedy?

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: I'm not that weird. I enjoy, you know, the unusual, and I will chuckle at most anything, believe me.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah, you know, it was ...

Frank Hudak: Every morning waking up and looking in the mirror, I have a good guffaw over that, you know.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs] I always welcome a chance to laugh, including at myself, but it's interesting, just coming back from Italy, the Renaissance was a period where so much art flourished that's still affecting people today. I mean millions of people go to see these works.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And at that time, it was the people in power who really valued and recognized the things that they felt would benefit all of mankind. I think that really is such

an important factor of a civilization, that one, that publishing houses and the, and artists and leaders do have a responsibility to the public and to the people.

Frank Hudak: Exactly. Yeah. I think what's happened now is that they are looking at the almighty dollar.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And it's, it's evolved to that, so it's, it's away from creativity [00:20:00] and true art.

Vanna Bonta: Absolutely.

Frank Hudak: At least the way we know it, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Right. Even the, some of the films in the '40s, so there are still some good films being made, but they had such long staying power and can move us today because they were sincere and they were also commercially viable, and the two do not have to ... in fact, don't exclude one another.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: , something commercial is something that really says it for a lot of people. But when the value is just turning the, you know, collecting the dollar at the box office in whatever way it can be done, it really shows and it really erodes ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah, it does.

Vanna Bonta: ... everything, so ...

Frank Hudak: And, the, the way I look at it, this is true of any form of manufacturing.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And, and I'm putting the film industry in the manufacturing industry because they're ultimately making a product. They don't really know what the people want, OK?

Vanna Bonta: That's right.

Frank Hudak: And then they'll, they'll build something or they'll put together a film. They hype it.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: Spend all kinds of money and try to literally brainwash you to believe that this is what you need to see. If you're gonna be "in," this is what ... you have to see this.

Vanna Bonta: Precisely.

Frank Hudak: You know. And it's all because they are trying to get back their investment and quadruple that.

Vanna Bonta: Exactly.

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: Which is not, doing something for the purpose that it should be done.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: Which is, again, a backward value. You know, money was a human invention that should reflect value, and it should be a result, prosperity should be a result of some service or product given.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. Actually, I, I'd love to go back to the barter system.

Vanna Bonta: That, that ...

Frank Hudak: I mean I really would because I feel if I have a service or something to offer to someone else who can offer their services to me, I'm a lot happier at that.

Vanna Bonta: Absolutely. It can, it can be a good system ...

Frank Hudak: It will never work, but ... [Laughs].

Vanna Bonta: No.

Frank Hudak: Not today, but it, it was a ... it's an interesting concept when you look at it though, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah. It's kind of hard to lug, if you build automobiles, to lug 'em to the market to trade them, but no. [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: Well, that's true, but you know.

Vanna Bonta: Well, which is why money was invented. It was easier to carry around.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, it probably was, although in [00:22:00] some places of the world, they, the, their money stones are bigger than I am, you know. You wonder how they ever spent them, remember?

Vanna Bonta: That's true [laughs].

Frank Hudak: [Laughs] This guy's got six of these things down there and he is the wealthiest. He can't spend them because they'll make him carry 'em away, you know [laughs].

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: But there they are. Hey listen, I'm kinda segueing into a little something here too. You did some writing for Gene Roddenberry, right?

Vanna Bonta: Right, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Frank Hudak: And he is the *Star Trek*, yeah.

Vanna Bonta: I started [crosstalk 00:22:26]

Frank Hudak: And why don't you tell us a little about that?

Vanna Bonta: Well, it was, first of all, a real honor ...

Frank Hudak: How did you connect with Gene?

Vanna Bonta: He read a, a manuscript of actually this book, *Flight* [crosstalk 00:22:36]

Frank Hudak: The, the book *Flight*, uh-huh (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And I was invited to submit when the series was being developed, and they sent a bible, and I submitted three stories, and he selected one of them, personally, and I was very thrilled to, to work for him and meeting with him. He explained to me how he was executive producer of the show but he said, "On my Sears credit card, under occupation, it says "writer." So I don't want you to feel intimidated by any ...

Frank Hudak: Wow.

Vanna Bonta: ... feedback or ideas that I give you," and it was just a wonderful experience.

Frank Hudak: Is, isn't it nice? I mean I, I wish that I could have met him. I really... He must have been so creative...

Vanna Bonta: A real visionary ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... in that show, and I think the show has a lot of parallels, ... well, it's interesting how fiction really does affect the future. And again, it's that spirit of

Art. The word "poetry," which is how I began, comes from the word "to make" or "to create."

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: And I, I think that's the basic element of the human spirit or will, which is to, no matter what circumstance and whether it's in the most mundane everyday activity or the creation of a work or piece of art or job, it's that ability to make and to create and to exercise the will on something to bring something into being.

It's interesting how fiction ... that we should never underestimate ... [00:24:00] any human being has the ability to affect his environment and his life. And it is our dignity and what links us to what I consider our divine right. I mean we're ...

Frank Hudak: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: We're immortal. We're human...

Frank Hudak: Sure.

Vanna Bonta: ...but we have this ability. So it's interesting how fiction really does affect. They often say that it catches up, where science fiction is written and then it later becomes reality.

Frank Hudak: That's true. That's true.

Vanna Bonta: And it's, it's so wonderful knowing that.

Frank Hudak: But you know, I, I've always been the type that, you know, if somebody says, "Oh, you can't do that," I kinda, I, I look at that like, "All right. He's thrown the gauntlet down."

Vanna Bonta: All right.

Frank Hudak: "That's a challenge. I'm going to look at this because I figure there is a way to do it."

Vanna Bonta: Them's fighting words again [laughs].

Frank Hudak: Yeah. And that's, you know, that's it. And I, I just kinda withdraw, and then I put the gears in motion because what do they say? The average person uses about 10% of the gray matter.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah, 1/10.

Frank Hudak: So what do we do with the other 90%? I don't know, but I'm working mine as long as I can.

Vanna Bonta: I like that. I feel the same way.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: I think ...

Frank Hudak: And, talking about that, you know, we spoke a little bit about, Jules Verne, all right? And, and he was probably one of the greatest fiction writers.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Or at least considered so at the time.

Vanna Bonta: Yes. And speaking of rejection slips, I think, *Leagues Under the Sea* was turned down, and his wife finally said, I think on the 58th try, "Just one more time," and it was accepted.

Frank Hudak: And it was accepted, right. And now look at it.

Vanna Bonta: The spirit of trying and persistence, I would like, just like to say that. But you were saying about, about Jules ...

Frank Hudak: Well, I mean some of the things that he wrote as fiction have all come true. You know, the submarine, the Nautilus, the power source for it, which was a brilliant white light which created steam, which, so on and so forth, all of these things, the underwater breathing apparatus, you know, skin diving equipment today.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And you go on with these other stories about *Journey to the, the Center of the Earth*.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: The man was a writer. He had never experienced any of this. He had never gone into the sea or whatever. Giant squid, [00:26:00] there are such animals.

Vanna Bonta: Yes. One was just found, a 28-foot tentacle ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... was in the Smithsonian, isn't it?

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: So, again, you have to take these things that are written, as fiction, and you know, we are supposed to be reasoning human beings.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And why can't you sit down and reason this thing out, you know, that maybe there is so much out there that we don't know. And what were you talking about a little bit earlier about the people that are here today but, or may have been here before?

Vanna Bonta: Yes, It's, ...

Frank Hudak: Interesting theory.

Vanna Bonta: Well, it is the theory that to every human being, there are two parts. There is the part of the body which begins at birth, but there is a, also an intelligence or a consciousness, which some call the soul, and which quantum physics has isolated in experiments by, through a process of elimination. And that consciousness really does exist. I mean they say time itself is not linear. That consciousness exists. It's almost like it interfaces with the human body to experience this dimension, like the body is kind of like a vessel in which we experience this dimension with its set laws. But that consciousness is who we really are as beings or as essences.

Frank Hudak: Wow.

Vanna Bonta: Souls, if you will.

Frank Hudak: That, that gets a little deep when you think about it, you know. But actually, you know, it does make sense, in a way. If you stop and think of some, even some of the different religious teachings, you know, and, and apply this to it, there could be something to that.

Vanna Bonta: Yes, well, I ...

Frank Hudak: I mean right now, it's fiction, but maybe someday it won't be.

Vanna Bonta: Right. I really think that from the point of view of fiction, we all have the ability, in some sense, to be writers of our own life. There are certain circumstances that are givens, that we are born into, or circumstances that are not directly under our control, [00:28:00] though the, though one of my theories for coincidence and synchronicity in *Flight* is that thought interplays with (reality)... there is no mere coincidence, and this ...

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: ... entire universe and our entire lives are a hand-in-hand effort between circumstance and some, I don't know, the word "higher self" is used... or a consciousness that we're not fully aware of or haven't fully tapped into

Frank Hudak: Right, right.

Vanna Bonta: , that brings or affects circumstances, including molecules, at certain times to align and coincide, so it's ...

Frank Hudak: Well, without getting too deep here, and we did talk about genetics.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: And it was interesting because genetics plays a part in what you look like.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: The color of your hair, even to certain genetic disorders that may be passed down.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: So who is to say at this point, considering how little we know about the human brain, that there aren't some genetics affecting the brain that we have?

Vanna Bonta: Absolutely. I think that's a great point, and again, it can be another theory. Why are there some people who will remember previous lives, or what they say are previous lives, and they will go to that point? I personally have had experiences which I feel began before the conception of this human body.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: it certainly seems that way. Now, one theory is that it could be, on a cellular level, there are memories ...

Frank Hudak: But, but you don't remember as being a whole person prior to this?

Vanna Bonta: I have some experiences which seem to be and certain places for which I have a particular, like an affection, that seem to go ... I mean some people say, well, it's inexpl-, you know, unexplainable or why ...

Frank Hudak: Well, you know, there is a lot of things out there that are not explainable.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: And one thing that I was reading just recently, where they have taken some of the Civil War re-enactors. [00:30:00] These people really get into what they're doing. They read about it. They study the authenticity of the uniforms that they're wearing. It's just impeccable. And now they have taken some of them and put them into deep trances, have come up with the fact that they start relating who they were, an individual who fought in a certain regimen, in a certain company, and died wherever and had a family of this, that, you know.

Now, bring these people out of the trance, they know nothing of this person. Check history books and you will find, or, or somewhere back in the history in the archives, they can find out and substantiate that yeah, there was this particular person.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: I mean it, it's eerie, in a way.

Vanna Bonta: It is.

Frank Hudak: And you wonder, you know.

Vanna Bonta: It's only eerie because there are parts of it that we don't completely understand, but I think it's actually ... I've often thought, "Do I believe in this because it's comforting to think that we don't just end?" And in *Flight*, the one character, Mendle Orion, who is the writer, is constantly grappling with, "What am I? Am I just this, uh, piece of flesh and bones and, and ...

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: ... blood that's going to end?" And it seems like such a blasphemy. Or the fact that someone that we love just is gone or that we, when we want to serve the people we love and be there for them could one day just be gone. But I, I really don't ... I think it's much more than just the desire to comfort that because everything in this universe has rhyme and reason.

Frank Hudak: But you know what's interesting? I heard a, a theory the other day, and, and it kinda made me think about it for a minute. And they said, you know, God only created but so many souls, and these souls just keep coming back in different bodies, but they just keep coming back all the time, and it, you know, it, it gave me pause for thought really. Didn't it?

Vanna Bonta: I ... it is something to really think about. I, I believe more people have had that experience than that are willing to talk about it or to even [00:32:00] realize. And poets and writers and tribes, even primitive tribes have been talking about it. In "*Ode to Immortality*," Wordsworth says, "Our birth is but a sleep and a

forgetting: The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, has had elsewhere its setting, and cometh from afar." It's just a, a, an experience.

It's almost as though when we have physical senses of the brain and eyes and sound, they cut off the consciousness of what we truly are as souls that have experienced all of Time and all of ... there is so much more to us. I think if people lived with that knowledge ... and that's under attack in today's society too. It's almost as though people, human life is becoming dispensable, with the increase of violence.

Frank Hudak: Exactly.

Vanna Bonta: It's because we don't realize that life, every moment is a spiritual and sacred miracle, miraculous experience.

Frank Hudak: It is.

Vanna Bonta: It, it rea-, it truly is.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. And, you know, every five minutes that goes by is gone forever.

Vanna Bonta: That's right.

Frank Hudak: You'll never get it back. That's five minutes that's gone.

Vanna Bonta: That's true.

Frank Hudak: And every day and every month and every year, and, and people don't always stop to think about that. But you know, I think, if I'm using this term properly, getting in tune with one's self ...

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: ... really almost mandates that they be somewhat emotional. I feel that way anyway.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Because if you understand the emotions, then I think the rest of this will just kinda come into play, and you'll start to break down this wall. You'll start to understand a little better. You'll start to feel a little more.

Vanna Bonta: I think that's very true, and where we get into trouble is when we start denying our emotions, and then it gets confusing as to which ones are real and which ones have I ...

Frank Hudak: That's true. That true.

Vanna Bonta: ... talked myself out of or changed? But emotions are really a gauge if you, if you listen to them. , I think everyone [00:34:00] can relate to this experience of having met someone or been in a situation and they couldn't quite put their finger on what was wrong or what was right, but something was telling them, "No, no, no."

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: "This is wrong," and yet they went ahead and talked themselves out of the emotion and did it. But they may not have known why or what, but ... and, there was a part [crosstalk 00:34:22]

Frank Hudak: So this is the kind, kinda like a, intuitive thing?

Vanna Bonta: That's an intuitive thing.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And anyone who is crying, why do we hide our tears from one another? And we do. I mean that's the first thing ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... that we go to cry. We want to hide it or close our faces possibly because it feels vulnerable, and maybe if there were true kindness and compassion and more understanding, we wouldn't do so.

Frank Hudak: That's true because, as we were speaking earlier about the customs in this country and the customs in Europe ...

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: OK? I mean they're miles apart.

Vanna Bonta: Yes, very.

Frank Hudak: And, and I'm sure that, ... well, you just came from Italy.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: I'm sure that Italian men are very emotional.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Are they?

Vanna Bonta: I was going to say that earlier when we were talking about ...

Frank Hudak: They're very expressive too, aren't they? [Laughs]

Vanna Bonta: Yes, very much so.

Frank Hudak: They talk with their hands a lot?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Yeah [laughs].

Vanna Bonta: They talk with their hands. In fact, cellular pho-, cellular phones have become the really big thing over there.

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: You can see tablefuls of people at a café with one another but they're talking on the cellular phone, and, and the joke was, well, they, now they can only use one hand.

Frank Hudak: One hand, right [laughs].

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs] So they have to ...

Frank Hudak: That's interesting. I ... just a little note, I read an article about this, that cellular phones are extremely popular throughout Europe because they, they are less costly and more reliable than the old hard wire phone systems.

Vanna Bonta: Probably so.

Frank Hudak: The, the phone companies over there are just kinda falling down on the job, you know. And cellphones, long before they became that popular here in, in the States were popular in Europe.

Vanna Bonta: That, that's good.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: that really makes sense because they are not on fiber optics, and in fact the Internet is very slow over there.

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: But they're planning in three years to be completely converted to fiber optics.

Frank Hudak: Oh.

Vanna Bonta: And you mentioned another thing about Europe which ... well, about manufacturing. [00:36:00] There are so many things in Europe that are just, it's almost impossible to eat badly in Italy.

Frank Hudak: Really?

Vanna Bonta: And even the most knicky-knack souvenir has a certain panache or quality. I was pondering this, and I said, "Well, what is it?" and it really comes down to one thing. Not only do people have a soul, but their products... It's almost like everything in creation came from love. And when something is made with true dedication or a job is done with true dedication and love, it has a soul. When it's not, it has no soul and is junk.

Frank Hudak: But you know, it used to be that way here. And it's sorrowful to have to say it, but it used to be that way before ... again, I'm coming right back to the almighty dollar, and I think ...

Vanna Bonta: It's becoming a god.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, that's it.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: That's it, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Rather than a tool.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. And, and people will say, "You know, money doesn't buy you happiness, but it sure would make me happy." Well, no, I'll tell you, I've been there, and it doesn't make you happy ...

Vanna Bonta: No.

Frank Hudak: ... because all you do is worry yourself into an early grave trying to figure out how to keep it.

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Because there's everybody trying to get it from you, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Yes. Oh, I've seen that.

Frank Hudak: And secondarily, life is too short. You know, I, I just want to enjoy life. I want to enjoy people. I want to enjoy life, and, and that's the way I look at it. If I got enough to pay for the roof over my head and three squares a day, I'm happy.

Vanna Bonta: I am too, and that's ... I've never seen a mansion make a person nor jewels or anything else.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And in fact, I think it would be a good drill to teach children and people, which is "Really look at who's there." You know, take away everything they own or have or just ... and ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: ... learn how to recognize and perceive just the human being back there.

Frank Hudak: Exactly. Exactly. Understand people, one on one.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: I mean that's where you really have to start. You talk about mansions. I visited a lot, and in Dallas. You have, too. They're always so cold when I walk in.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Did you ever, did you ever think about that?

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: They're big. they're empty. They're cold. And I think what kind of relationship could anybody have living in a place like that? I mean if it's, [00:38:00] if it's just for show, buy a movie set or something, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: The warmest, friendliest people are in the little cozy cottages.

Vanna Bonta: It's true, and I've often wondered why is that? and would it be possible to survive, ... you see, what happens is the mansion starts owning the person, and that's the real test.

Frank Hudak: That's true.

Vanna Bonta: I'm sure that a few people have survived the experience of, amassing ... and I think what happens, I, I realize what greed is. Greed is the fear ... people that suffer from greed are afraid that they cannot create or make something. And some of the most wealthy men have faith in their ability to create, but I think the ability to create and who we are eliminates the need to be a predator and to take or to amass in order to be.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. Well, greed, you know, another word for avarice, and avarice is a sin.

Vanna Bonta: Yes, it is.

Frank Hudak: But, but the people look at ... some people look at money as power.

Vanna Bonta: Right, and ...which it is.

Frank Hudak: And, and ...

Vanna Bonta: It's a tool.

Frank Hudak: Yeah. It's a tool, but ...

Vanna Bonta: But, then why is it a sin, you know, even going beyond just a judgment? It's because when one puts anything above or before the soul or the spirit, in its ability to create and its purpose and, and service, then it's a violation against oneself. You know, it's not just ...

Frank Hudak: Right.

Vanna Bonta: ... "Oh, you've done wrong." Why? I mean every sin has a reason behind it.

Frank Hudak: You know, I think the biggest problem is that people really, really need to stop. Stop, as they say ...

Vanna Bonta: And [crosstalk 00:39:43]

Frank Hudak: ... smell the flowers.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah [laughs].

Frank Hudak: Whatever it takes. We get so wrapped up, and that machine starts running faster and faster and faster, and before you know it, your whole life has gone by, and ...

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: What do you have? Where are your memories?

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: You know. Where are those ... and I call 'em "warm and fuzzies."

Vanna Bonta: [00:40:00] They are.

Frank Hudak: Because they are to me, you know.

Vanna Bonta: Oh, and they're the most vital ...

Frank Hudak: Aren't they? I, I ... you cannot put a value on something like that.

Vanna Bonta: No.

Frank Hudak: No way.

Vanna Bonta: It ... no. It has eternal value. I mean it is the ... it is the fullness and the wealth, and it's easy just to think that, well, that winning the lottery would solve every problem, but having seen access to limitless funds, I mean it's just, with ... it's ...

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: It's not the solution.

Frank Hudak: No, it isn't.

Vanna Bonta: And it's not what life is about.

Frank Hudak: It really isn't. No. It creates more problems. And of course, people who have never had that money that are pooh-pooh-ing us right now, saying, "You know, you, you guys are full of it," ... but, believe me ...

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: Happiness cannot be purchased with money.

Vanna Bonta: No.

Frank Hudak: Not true happiness.

Vanna Bonta: Never.

Frank Hudak: OK? And that's something that's, ...

Vanna Bonta: Or value.

Frank Hudak: Or, or value, sure.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Exactly. Hey listen, I want to talk about the book a little bit. This is kinda neat. And the book is entitled, "*Flight*."

Vanna Bonta: Right.

Frank Hudak: All right. , and I didn't have a date when you published it. More recently, didn't you?

Vanna Bonta: , *Flight*, the "light" part lights up.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: So it's "**FLight**." [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: "*FLight*." Oh. I'm sorry.

Vanna Bonta: No, no. I was just [crosstalk 00:41:17]

Frank Hudak: Now I'm taking a grammar lesson from a writer.

Vanna Bonta: Oh, no, no.

Frank Hudak: I need this.

Vanna Bonta: It's not a grammar lesson.

Frank Hudak: No?

Vanna Bonta: I was just thinking of a, of a way ...

Frank Hudak: Oh, this is a ...

Vanna Bonta: How could the, how could people who can't see it through audio ... see the "**light**" part light up.

Frank Hudak: You're good.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: You, you are so good, yeah.

Vanna Bonta: Did they get it out there? I don't know, but anyway, it was just a thought [laughs].

Frank Hudak: We'd love to put you on TV, but this is radio, so [laughs] you do it the best way you can, right?

Vanna Bonta: That's right [laughs]. And it first came out in hard cover, in '95, last year.

Frank Hudak: OK. Last year.

Vanna Bonta: And then was just released in the soft cover version.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, uh-huh (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: , so ...

Frank Hudak: And I guarantee I'm going to finish that. I got partway through it.

Vanna Bonta: OK.

Frank Hudak: And it just, it just grabbed me. Once, [00:42:00] I got started, I got into it. I told you it's just really starting to come together for me, you know. But let me ask you a question here.

Vanna Bonta: OK.

Frank Hudak: These UFOs and ETs, you know, are they really out there among us? Do you believe they are?

Vanna Bonta: I don't ... I have not personally seen one, but I really have sufficient experience and have had discussions with very credible sources that would, that would confirm that ...

Frank Hudak: There is something?

Vanna Bonta: There, there is something.

Frank Hudak: Yeah.

Vanna Bonta: And there is also definitely non-human intelligence. In fact, there are institutes that study non-human intelligence, which is everything from [crosstalk 00:42:40]

Frank Hudak: Geez. I got a couple of brothers like that.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: [Laughs]

Vanna Bonta: From life, from, to including intelligence that does not have corporal body at all.

Frank Hudak: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Vanna Bonta: Just in, ...

Frank Hudak: Are you talking about energy?

Vanna Bonta: Energy, yeah.

Frank Hudak: Yeah?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah, energy.

Frank Hudak: Well, you know ... what's interesting about that, I had heard, and someone told me that sound waves never really leave the planet. They're, they're up in ionosphere or somewhere, right?

Vanna Bonta: Yes.

Frank Hudak: Sound waves from the beginning of time. That means that when people like Mohammed, when people like Christ walked the earth and spoke and whatever, the sound waves are still there.

Vanna Bonta: That is very interesting.

Frank Hudak: Isn't it wild?

Vanna Bonta: Yeah. Well ...

Frank Hudak: And, and now that's proven. They can prove that, you know, that the sound does not leave.

Vanna Bonta: Well, it's ... I'm sure that it is, and also, another aspect of the frontier of science is that matter, energy, space, and time are actually the same fabric. So, you know, the floor, the car, the road, the tabletop is matter because it's dense, but it's also a wavelength, and it's also creating Time, which is the motion of molecules through space. And that the whole thing actually exists simultaneously, including ... and this really stretches it, though. I do ponder these things, [00:44:00] in my idle, uh ... not my idle hours but my hours of solitude ... that it all is just simultaneous ...

Frank Hudak: That's all right. I mean you're entitled to have some idle hours.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: I mean ...

Vanna Bonta: Geez, thanks. That's really nice [crosstalk 00:44:11] [laughs]

Frank Hudak: Every, everybody [laughs]. Everybody's gotta have a little time off here, OK? I mean we don't think that you work all the time.

Vanna Bonta: [Laughs]

Frank Hudak: I mean you'd burn out just like that if you did.

Vanna Bonta: Yeah.

Frank Hudak: Yeah, you need that time, and ...

###

Radio, talk show, interview, transcript, Frank Hudak, Vanna Bonta, WTRV, FM radio, Richmond, AM radio, 1996, Flight by Vanna Bonta, Flight: a quantum fiction novel, author, interview, radio guest, beauty, anorexia, women, emotions, writers, writing, rejection, advertising, publishing, rejection slips, Renaissance, commercialism, movies, greed, emotions, women vs. men, psychic, intuition, beauty industry, and her newly released novel, StarTrek, Gene Roddenberry, StarTrek: TNG, science fiction, Jules Vernes, soul, consciousness, death, reincarnation, coincidence, synchronicity, writing, Italy, Italian, cell phones, money, greed, avarice, wealth, UFO, ET, extraterrestrial, non-human intelligence, Time.